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(NRO)

Copy 1 of 4

29 November 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR : Deputy Director (Plans)  
THROUGH : Acting Chief, DPD *8/11/61*  
SUBJECT : Draft Paper on Division of Responsibility, NRO  
REFERENCE : OXC-2695, Memo from DD/P, 24 November 1961, to SA/TA/DPD,  
25X1A re letter from [redacted] to Dr. Charyk, 11/14/61

1. Attached is a paper which suggests the position we should take on the division of responsibilities between the two parts of the National Reconnaissance Office. I would suggest that you carry on on that note.

2. There have been several discussions in recent weeks between General Curtin, Col. Martin and Maj. Howard of the Air Force, and Col. Beerli and Messrs. Cunningham, Parangosky and Kiefer, separately or together, all to the point of reaching agreement, or defining areas of disagreement as to organization and procedures of the NRO. Out of these discussions has come Mr. Cunningham's memo of 17 November, which describes the SAFUS internal organization and functions and their methods of communication.

3. There is also a DPD Security Office memo for the record of 22 November which records a staff level preliminary agreement on a standardized security system for NRO matters. This latter point is one of the specific matters discussed in the Secretary of Defense's letter of 6 September 1961 which establishes the NRO.

4. The DOD directive also requires, in addition to other things, the establishment of a technical advisory group, which has been done, the continued use of the establishment of requirements and priorities by the USIB mechanism, which represents no change from current practice, and the working out of organization and procedures within the NRO, toward which the attached paper is directed.

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NRO and USAF  
review(s) completed.

EPK/hk

[redacted]  
EUGENE P. KIEFER  
Special Assistant  
for Technical Analysis  
DPD-DD/P

1 - DD/P  
2 - AC/DPD  
3 - C/DB  
4 - SA/TA - *destroyed*

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28 November 1961

DIVISION OF RESPONSIBILITY WITHIN NRO

The National Reconnaissance Office was established by joint agreement between the Department of Defense and Central Intelligence Agency through the mechanism of a covert combination of certain elements within the Air Force and within the CIA. Through this combination and by virtue of the authority granted to the NRO by the aforementioned agreement, this office has thereby been given authority and responsibility over several ongoing reconnaissance programs. These programs are in different stages of development and operation. They have in certain cases been instituted, funded and managed, both technically and operationally, and protected securitywise in somewhat differing fashions.

~~In order that the extent of disruption of these programs can be held to a minimum by the establishment of a National Reconnaissance Office, it is the view of the CIA that no changes should be instituted in management and assignment of responsibility for these programs from under NRO banner on a carefully considered basis, in which they are now handled, unless a demonstrable improvement in program management will result. Furthermore, any such changes agreed upon should be instituted on a carefully time-phased basis to minimize program disruption.~~

~~As a second matter of principle, it is the view of the CIA that the working relationships established within the NRO itself and~~

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the assignment of authority and responsibility between the two parts of the office must remain sufficiently broad and flexible so that new programs not now well defined will not be forced into a pattern of management which would make difficult the technical direction, funding, operational control or the security of such programs.

Finally, in the view of the CIA, the division within the NRO on funding and technical direction should be that the Air Force assumes primary responsibility for all such "white" activities, that is, procurements which are of extremely large scope or which require competitive bidding, or for other reason cannot be concealed from the normal Department of Defense security system; and that the CIA will assume primary responsibility for the so-called "black" procurements, which for reasons of security must be concealed from all persons not knowledgeable of the specific program involved.

Returning now to the ongoing projects mentioned previously, which the National Reconnaissance Office will direct from here on, the following specific assignments of primary responsibility within the NRO are reaffirmed:

OXCART: The management, technical direction, operational control and security of project OXCART will remain as it has in the past under the primary auspices of the CIA. The primary responsibility for the Air Force variants of OXCART will, as they have in the past, be the primary concern of the Air Force. In all matters of mutual interest

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and specifically on the management of interrelated items such as the development of air frame, of engines, and of mutual components, the project personnel will provide crossflow of information between the Air Force and CIA with particular attention being given to decisions made which may have secondary impacts from one program to another. The project officers within CIA for the basic OXCART system and within the Air Force for the Air Force adaptations will be the focal point for this information crossflow.

*(MILITARY AREA)*  
CORONA: Over-all security aspects of this program will continue as in the past within the framework of the agreed security system under primary cognizance of CIA. Launch scheduling and launching, orbital and recovery operations will remain under primary cognizance of the Air Force. Primary cognizance for management and technical direction of hardware aspects will remain within the Air Force for boosters, orbital vehicles, [redacted]

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and within CIA for photographic payloads and nosecones. At a suitable time [redacted] cognizance should shift [redacted]

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to CIA and standardized nosecone cognizance should revert to the Air Force. *When & if all re-calling facilities can be later incorporated in a secure area.* The CIA will continue primary cognizance of operational planning and control of payload operation and target coverage. As above, the Air Force and CIA project officers will be focal points for crossflow of information within NRO.

SAMOS: Security aspects of this activity have been aligned with the procedures of the agreed-to uniform security system of NRO.

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~~As in the past, management, technical direction and operational control of all present ongoing aspects of this project will remain under primary cognizance of the Air Force for the immediate future. The desirability of mutual use of certain assets for this project and~~ <sup>25X1</sup> ~~MURK/ARGON~~ CORONA, particularly in the areas of target planning and operations, NRO is being explored.

~~No project officers, as such, are or will be designated within CIA for SAMOS activities. In this case the focal points for crossflow of information will be project officers within the Air Force and functional staff officers for photographic and ELINT payloads and for satellite operations within CIA.~~

~~In addition to the projects named above, certain other activities, largely of an ELINT nature, will, if continued, fall under NR the cognizance of the National Reconnaissance Office.~~ <sup>25X1</sup> ①

~~these ELINT projects are under individual scrutiny in order to reach a decision as to desirability of continuance and appropriate division of management responsibility in line with the assignment of "black" & "white" procurement & technical direction functions.~~  
~~Project IDEALIST, to the extent that this activity remains in being, will continue in all aspects under primary cognizance of CIA.~~

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A uniform system of security control for all projects falling under NRO cognizance has been established. This system will dictate appropriate procedures to be used by either AirForce or CIA security personnel and is in line with policies established for the security restrictions which surround highly sensitive activities of this nature. The Air Force and CIA parts of the NRO are being linked by secure communication facilities for mutual exchange of information relating to NRO activities.

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CIA INTERNAL ORGANIZATION WITHIN NRO

DD/P:

Selected Staff Members

DPD:

Office of Acting Chief  
Assistant Chief  
Executive Officer

Development Branch  
Special Assistant for Technical Analysis  
Administrative Staff  
Security Office  
Contracts Staff  
Finance  
Special Projects Branch  
Communications

OSI:

Deputy Asst. Director (ELINT Matters)

*On my  
for review*

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